

Reconstructing Iraq

Helping Those Forced from Their Homes



Photo: Arlo K. Abrahamson

During Saddam Hussein's rule, many Iraqis were forced to leave their homes for a variety of reasons. Some could not earn a living for themselves and their families; others fled because the lives of those close to them were threatened. Known as internally displaced persons (IDPs), these people are usually the first and hardest hit during times of conflict.

USAID's Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) is placing a special emphasis on assisting Iraqis forced to flee their homes. USAID is working to bring stability and security back to communities so that these vulnerable people can be safe. These efforts include traditional human assistance, security measures, job creation, and environmental improvement.

On behalf of the American people, USAID:

- Monitored the situation of IDPs in northern cities such as Kirkuk, Dohuk, Zamar, and Domiz, where 100,000 Kurdish families were driven from their homes as part of Saddam Hussein's campaign to replace native populations with Arabs.
- Is sorting out the dynamics of conflicting property claims for returning IDPs, so that ultimately conflicts can be resolved by legal means within an established justice system.
- Provided relief supplies for 500,000 IDPs in central and southern Iraq and coordinated the distribution of supplies for another 2 million people in the region.
- Sent a team of hydrologists, environmental specialists, and economists to study how to restore areas drained by Saddam Hussein to punish Marsh Arabs after the first Gulf War.
- Through abuse prevention officers are funding several indigenous Iraqi human rights organizations including groups in Al Basrah, Nasiriyah, Karbala, Najaf, Baghdad, and al Kut.

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